# WATER BAPTISM.

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# WATER BAPTISM,

## A TRACT:

BY THE
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# WATER BAPTISM.

**Baptism an outward ceremony.**

THAT baptism is but an outward ceremony, and like all outward ceremonies, was intended to teach some spiritual truth, none will deny. It will also be admitted that, apart from the truth intended thus to be signalized, the outward rite is nothing in itself, having no value or significance whatever. As the bread and the wine in the eucharist are unmeaning and worthless, apart from the death of Christ, so the water and the ceremony in baptism can mean nothing apart from the spiritual truth designed to be taught. It becomes, therefore, an exceedingly important matter in considering the question of mode, first, to ascertain the symbolical import of this rite. What is its meaning, its object, its design? What spiritual truth or truths was it intended thus to illustrate and teach? Indeed,

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The key.

an answer to these inquiries will furnish the key to the whole controversy; for all outward rites and ceremonies derive not only their efficacy, but also their *mode*, from the thing signified. As they are intended to be pictorial representations of inward and spiritual truths, there must of necessity be some suitableness in the character of the symbols used. Baptism could never represent Christ walking on the sea, or the Supper, His ascension into heaven. In every ceremony the symbol is always made to conform to the thing symbolized. Every picture must be like its object. Every shadow must assume the shape and configuration of the producing substance. As baptism is only the shadow or picture of some spiritual idea or truth, if you know what that idea or truth is, you will then know what shape to give the shadow, and what kind of a picture to draw. The meaning of the rite clearly determines the mode. What, then, is that spiritual idea or truth that is intended to be thus represented to the eye?

## I. SYMBOLICAL IMPORT.

Symbolical import.

There are two distinct sets of opinion on this subject, and consequently two corresponding modes of practice. There are those, on the one hand, who make it symbolical of the burial and resurrection of Christ, and who claim that immersion must be the mode; for there can be burial with Christ in no other way. Then there are those, on the other hand, who make it a ceremonial washing, symbolical of Spirit baptism, and who claim that affusion must be the mode, since the Spirit is always represented as being poured out, and descending upon. The key to the one theory is the figurative expression, "Buried in baptism"; the key to the other, the declaration, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost."

Two interpretations.

We need not say that one or the other of these interpretations must be false. Things so diverse can never be made to agree. If the rite be a burial, it cannot be a cleansing, and if a cleansing, it cannot be a burial; and the correctness of either must neces-

One or the other false

sitate the overthrow of the other, with its entire train of deductive reasonings and inferences. If baptism be a burial, then our notions, both as to the mode and subjects, are overthrown; for none but believers can be so buried with Christ as to arise to newness of life. If symbolical of cleansing, on the other hand, then the whole theory of the immersionist is just as effectually undermined, since cleansing is never effected by means of a burial. The whole question, then, hinges upon this one point: *Is baptism a burial or a cleansing?*

**Where question hinges.**

**Does not represent the burial and resurrection of Christ.**

That baptism was never designed to represent the burial and resurrection of Christ will appear from the following considerations:

**Robs Spirit of His only seal.**

1. *The interpretation robs the Spirit of the only seal to His work.*

In the great work of redemption each Person of the Trinity has His respective part to perform. The Father purposes and plans; the Son and Spirit execute. The Father elects, the Son redeems, and the Spirit sanctifies.

As the Son and Spirit are the executors of the Father's will, we naturally expect the work of salvation to be divided into two parts; and so it is. The work of the Son is distinct from that of the Spirit, and the work of the Spirit distinct from that of the Son. The work of the Son is to make atonement; the work of the Spirit is to apply that atonement. The fruit of the one is justification; the fruit of the other, sanctification.

**Two branches in the work of redemption.**

If, then, the work of redemption resolves itself into two distinct and equally important branches, it is but reasonable to suppose that they would, in some way, be represented to the eye. These two ideas were clearly set forth under the old dispensation. The altar and the laver stood side by side. The sacrifices typified Christ; the ablutions the cleansing of the Holy Spirit. Now, as the Supper unquestionably refers to the death of Christ, to refer baptism to His burial is to append two seals to His work, and leave none to the Spirit, and at the same time leave wholly

unrepresented this great idea of cleansing. But is not the work of the Spirit just as important as the work of the Son? If the Spirit does not apply the atonement of Christ, it will be wholly unavailing. If the Spirit does not cleanse and sanctify the heart, the kingdom of glory will ever remain inaccessible. Why, then, should the work of the Son have two seals appended to it, and the work of the Spirit have none? Is it not strange, yea, doubly strange, that this great idea of cleansing, so prominently set forth under the one dispensation, should be so completely overlooked in the other, or that of a burial substituted in its place? Is it not strange that the Holy Spirit, one of the executors of the Father's will, should be left without any symbol of His presence, or seal to His work, and that, too, under a dispensation which is emphatically a dispensation of the Spirit? Is it not strange that, when the baptisms of the New Testament are all characterized by the presence of the Spirit, when believers are all "baptized into one body by the same Spirit,"

Two seals to work of the Son.

and when the great need of the Church, and that for which we are continually praying, is the "baptism of the Spirit," His work, after all, should be so completely ignored and dishonored, according to this theory of immersionists, as to be left without any seal or representative symbol?

Two seals to things nearly related.

Nor yet is this all. Not only are two seals affixed, but affixed to things nearly related. The idea of death involves the idea of burial. We already have the Supper, which represents the death of Christ. Why, then, add another seal to His burial, when it is legitimately implied in His death? And why celebrate His resurrection, when that event is so completely and perpetually signalized by each returning Christian Sabbath? Is it reasonable to suppose that two seals would be affixed to the work of the Son, and that His resurrection would be twice signalized, whilst the work of the Spirit, equally important, is entirely overlooked?

We are fully aware that the defenders of the

Bridging the hiatus. theory, to bridge over a hiatus so manifestly unscriptural, endeavour to make the ordinance refer indirectly and secondarily to the work of the Spirit; but it surely must strike every one as highly incongruous to link together, under one symbol, things so manifestly diverse. Burial and cleansing have nothing in common. There is nothing in the former to produce the latter, nor is there anything in the latter to require the former. With equal propriety you might refer the Supper both to the death of Christ and the baptism of the Spirit. If water represents the tomb of Jesus, it cannot represent the outpouring of the Spirit. If baptism be a burial, it cannot be a washing.

Introduces confusion. 2. *The interpretation introduces confusion, putting burial before death.* All admit that baptism must precede the Supper. All likewise admit that the Supper refers to the death of Christ. If, then, baptism refers to His burial, we are actually required to celebrate His burial before His death. We are

to celebrate His burial in baptism, and then celebrate His death afterwards in the Supper. In the order of nature, death always precedes burial, but this interpretation inverts the order, and places burial before death. Was Christ buried before He died? To be consistent with the facts in the case, we ought to go first to the table and celebrate His death, and then afterwards to the water and celebrate His burial. As it is, we are actually required to make war upon nature by placing burial before death, thus celebrating His burial in baptism by way of preparation for the celebration of His death in the Supper. Is this the planning of an all-wise Creator? Is He the God of confusion? The whole universe lifts up its voice to proclaim law and order in all His counsels and His plans. We see it in the heavens above, and and in the earth beneath; we see it in the lightning's flash, in the thunder's roar, in the dashing ocean, the upheaving volcano, and the desolating earthquake; and we feel assured that the

**Places burial before death.**

**Makes war upon nature.**

very disorder and confusion of the profoundest hell is not an exception to the rule. Death before burial, the whole world allows, but burial before death is unnatural and unscriptural.

Makes water the symbol of uncleanness.

3. *The interpretation makes water the symbol of uncleanness.*

Error is always contradictory. One false position invariably necessitates another. A theft requires a falsehood for its concealment. The interpretation before us being false, becomes hopelessly entangled on every side. It not only puts burial before death, but also makes water the symbol of uncleanness. Water has not only by the common consent of mankind in all ages, but also by divine law, always been the symbol of purification. If, then, baptism symbolizes a burial, that which has always been the symbol of purification will become the symbol of the grave—above all others, the place of putridity and uncleanness; and the Holy Spirit is thus made to contradict himself by making water the symbol of purification under one dispensation, and of rottenness and uncleanness under another.

At war with the symbolism of the entire Scriptures.

4. *The interpretation is at war with the symbolism of the entire Scriptures.* Symbols always represent things the same in kind. Thus bondage in Egypt stands for bondage in sin; the deliverance from Egypt, for deliverance from sin; the land of Canaan, for the heavenly city; the sacrifices for another sacrifice. For the same reason baptism must be the symbolical representation of another and higher baptism. To refer it to burial is to make it the only exception to this universal rule. Look for a moment at the picture. Bondage represents another bondage; deliverance another deliverance; the land of Canaan, another land; the city of Jerusalem another city; the prophets another prophet; the priests another priest; the kings another king; the sacrifices another sacrifice; the Lord's Supper another supper; but *baptism*, strange to say, the only exception to this universal rule, is made the symbol, not of another baptism, but of a burial! It does seem that, with just as much propriety, we might make

the ordinance represent Christ walking on the sea, or His ascension into heaven.

Makes John's baptism a burial.

5. *The interpretation makes John's baptism a burial with Christ before He was dead, or even before it was known that He was to die.*

Immersionists tell us that John's baptism was Christian baptism. Admit it for argument's sake. Then what did John's baptism symbolize? Baptism must mean the same thing under both dispensations. It cannot mean one thing under John and another under Christ. If it means the burial of Christ now, it meant the burial of Christ then. If so, then John's baptism represented the burial of Christ; and John's disciples were actually buried with Christ before Christ was Himself buried, or even before they knew He was to die. Is it at all reasonable to suppose that John would have practised a rite concerning the nature of which his disciples were so profoundly ignorant?

Then, too, with whom was Christ buried? He, too, was baptized. Was He buried with

himself, and thus celebrating His own burial and resurrection? Who does not see at a single glance that this interpretation, upon which the whole immersion theory rests, carries indelibly stamped upon its very face the overwhelming proof of its falsity?

Makes burial an act of consecration.

6. *The interpretation makes burial an act of consecration.*

The whole Christian world are agreed that baptism is an act of consecration. But who ever heard of consecration being effected by means of a burial? Aaron and his sons were consecrated to the priestly office by having oil poured on their heads. The inauguration of Saul and David as kings of Israel was effected by pouring oil upon their heads. Elisha was inducted into the prophetical office in the same way. Jacob consecrated Bethel by setting up a stone and pouring oil upon it. The altar was consecrated by sprinkling oil upon it. The tabernacle and sacred vessels were consecrated in the same way, by the same anointing oil. From Moses down to the apostles, the method of con-

secration was by pouring or sprinkling; and never until these later times did the Church hear anything about consecration by means of a burial. God's plan is one of development. The old dispensation is but the flower; the new, the fruit. There is absolutely nothing in the new but what is shadowed forth in the old. In what ancient rite, then, is this burial theory shadowed forth?

**Unduly emphasizes an unimportant event.**

7. *The interpretation unduly emphasizes a comparatively unimportant event.*

Is there any conceivable reason why the burial of Christ should be celebrated in so solemn a manner? It formed no part of the atonement. When the Saviour cried, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost, He then paid the whole of the ransom price. It is His *death*, not His burial, that is the ground of our pardon, and the foundation of our hope. We are saved because He *died*, not because He was buried; and if He had never been buried at all, our hope would not have been in the least impaired. He was buried, not because it had any-

thing to do with our pardon, but that it might exhibit the certainty of His death. And He rose again because His work was done, and the law had no further claim upon Him; and in so doing has become a pledge to believers that they shall also rise. When it says, "He arose again for our justification," it certainly does not mean that His resurrection forms the ground of our justification, for that would contradict the whole tenor of the Scriptures, but simply that He rose again because our justification was effected. Thus it is in the original. He was delivered up, *διά, on account* of our offences, and He rose again, *διά*, the same preposition, on account of our justification. He died on account of the fact that our sins were put upon Him; He arose again on account of the fact that our sins were removed from Him; in other words, that the atonement was accepted, and the work of our justification now completed. Instead, therefore, of our justification being the result of His resurrection, His resurrection is actually the result of our prospective justification.

If, then, His burial forms no part of the plan of salvation, and no part of the atonement, why should a solemn ordinance be instituted for its symbolical representation? Why celebrate such an unimportant event in the most solemn manner imaginable, in the name of the Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost?

Unsupported by any positive precept.

8. *The interpretation is unsupported by any positive precept.*

Then, after all, where is the positive precept for all of this? We are commanded to baptize. "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." We are commanded to celebrate the death of Christ, and not only to celebrate that death, but we are told how to do it: "This do in remembrance of Me;" in other words, "This is the thing you are to do in commemoration of My death." But where are we either commanded to celebrate His burial, or told how to do it? The only foundation we have ever been able to find for this whole theory is not any "positive precept,"

but simply a figurative expression incidentally used by one of the apostles. Now we submit, if, according to the anti-pedobaptist postulate, a positive precept be absolutely necessary to sustain a positive institution, will not the same positive precept likewise be required to sustain this burial ordinance? If so, then where is that positive precept?

From these considerations alone, others will appear as we proceed, it is perfectly obvious that baptism has nothing to do with the burial of Christ, and therefore that the expression "buried with Him in baptism' is to be understood figuratively, just as the expressions "crucified with Him," "dead with Him," "circumcised with Him." If we can be crucified with Christ, die with Him, and be circumcised with Him, by a figure of speech, why may we not also, by a similar figure, be buried with Him? If the simple expression "buried with Him" be sufficient foundation for a burial theory, so the expression crucified with Him" would be sufficient foundation for a crucifixion theory, or the expression, "circumcised with Him," sufficient

for a circumcision theory. If we can be crucified without a literal crucifixion, and circumcised without a literal circumcision, and die without a literal death, why may we not also be buried without a literal burial?

The whole context shows that the main object of the apostle, in the use of the expression, was not to teach the symbolical import of baptism, nor yet its mode, but to show the certainty of the believer's death unto sin; hence the variety of figures employed. At one time we are "crucified with Christ;" at another, "dead with Him;" and then here not only dead, but even "buried with Him." If, then, we be crucified, dead, and even buried with Him, we are also crucified, dead, and buried unto sin, and the question is fairly answered, "Shall we continue in sin?"

**Object of apostle to show certainty of believer's death.**

### Buried with Christ.

**Further consideration of the passage.**

As this expression is the stronghold of the immersionists, before we proceed any further, we must determine

precisely its meaning. Buried with Christ. How? When? Where? And just here we venture the assertion that the position of the immersionist involves the fallacy known among logicians as the "ambiguous middle," the term "buried with Christ" being used in two distinct senses. In theory it is applied to Christ's burial in the tomb; but in common parlance it refers to His burial in the water. In argument, the rock tomb of Joseph is meant; but when standing beside the pool, the expression so commonly used carries but the one idea to the mind, either of administrator, candidate, or multitude; and that is the idea of burial with Christ in His "liquid grave." The other idea of burial in the tomb is completely shut out by reason of its remoteness, and the utter impossibility of the mind taking in, at the same time, things so diverse and disjointed. Which, then, do they mean,—a literal burial in the water, or a figurative burial in the tomb? To say water burial is to surrender the whole theory; for the theory is that baptism rep-

Meaning of phrase "Buried with Christ."

resents Christ's resurrection from the tomb, and not from the water. Besides, if water burial be meant, then believers' baptism becomes typical of Christ's baptism, and its object to celebrate that baptism, which is forbidden both by Scripture and the law of symbols, which requires it to be a baptism of another and higher character. If it is said, on the other hand, that tomb burial is meant, then we ask, How comes it to pass that the idea of Christ's burial in Joseph's tomb is never suggested by the administration of the ordinance? Strange that the multitudes should meet together to celebrate the burial and resurrection of Christ, and no one get the idea, or ever once remembers, that Christ was buried in the rock tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. Is it reasonable that God would have instituted an ordinance so unsuggestive? Besides, if tomb burial be meant, then, as Christ's and believers' baptism are alike, the object of Christ's baptism would be to represent His own tomb burial—another position equally unscriptural and therefore untenable. We insist upon it, that the

phrase, as commonly used, is totally fallacious, carrying a double face, one for the logician, and another for the unthinking multitude.

The true exposition.

The true exposition of this passage, as it appears to us, is, that the apostle is not speaking of water baptism at all, but of a spiritual burial flowing out of our baptism *into Christ's death.* He does not say we are buried simply because baptized, but because baptized into Christ's death. The burial is the result of the baptism into His death. And this baptism into death at once removes the burial and resurrection from a literal to a spiritual field. The resurrection must be as the burial. If the burial be a literal one so must the resurrection; but the apostle asserts that the resurrection is spiritual, for it is, "unto newness of spiritual life," and also by "faith in the operation of God." If the resurrection be spiritual, then, according to the law of antithesis, the burial must also be spiritual. Furthermore, the apostle asserts that the likeness of the resurrection must be accord-

Resurrection according to likeness of death.

ing to the likeness of the death. The death is spiritual, so must also the resurrection. Thus, if the death and resurrection both be spiritual, so also must be the burial. We understand, therefore, the apostle to mean that when baptized, we are baptized into Christ's death; and when baptized into His death, we are made partakers, not only of His death, but also of His burial and resurrection; so that, in a certain sense, His death, burial and resurrection are all ours. We died with Him when He died; were buried with him when He was buried; rose with Him when He rose, being "quickened together with Him;" so that now we are "complete in Him;" our new life being the result of our union with Him. The simple idea then is, that we are buried with Christ *διά, by means of*, or *on account of*, our baptism into His death, as it is clearly expressed in the original. In other words, that our burial was the result of our baptism, and not our baptism the result of our burial. We are buried with Him be-

cause we have been baptized into His death, and not baptized because buried in the water.

### Of What the Symbol.

Of what the symbol.

If, then, baptism does not refer to the burial of Christ, of what is it the symbol? We answer it must, and can be, the symbol only of that which actually engrafts into union with the Godhead. In every sacrament there must of necessity be three parts—the outward symbol, the act, and the design or end. The outward element must represent something; the act must mean something; and the result must accomplish something. Determine the latter of these, and you have the two former. Determine the thing accomplished in this ordinance, and you have both the act, and the meaning of the act; and the symbol, and the thing symbolized. What, then, is the thing accomplished? Surely not a mere immersion into water; for that would degrade the whole into an idle ceremony, and at the same time be adopting afresh the old Popish heresy

of the *opus operatum.* And yet it is imposible to see how this conclusion is to be avoided upon the burial hypothesis, especially if we consider that hypothesis in connection with the commission or baptismal formula used. The words of the commission are susceptible of but the two constructions, which are as widely separated as the poles. Either "go and 'baptize' *into* the name," as we have it, or "go and 'immerse' *in* the name"—that is, by the authority of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, as our Baptist brethren hold. In the one we baptize into a name; in the other we simply immerse by the authority of a name. The result of the one is the inauguration of a relation: the result of the other the performance of an act, and that act terminating upon itself. Under the former the thing commanded, and therefore the thing accomplished, is the engrafting into a name, and the after assumption of that name. Under the latter the thing commanded, and therefore the thing accomplished, is not a baptizing or engrafting into anything, or an in-

auguration of any relation with the persons of the Trinity, or an assumption of obligation in any shape or form, but a bare burial in water: the ordinance becoming the end itself, the formula used only stating the fact that the individual was immersed by Divine authority, without telling why the authority was given or what was to be accomplished by its exercise.

But are we told that this is an unfair presentation of the case: that the act contemplates resurrection; that the man is buried that he might rise again to newness of life? Then we would respectfully ask where do we get these ideas from?

**No resurrection in the commission.**

Surely not in the commission. That commission does not say one word about a resurrection out of anything. It says not one word about newness of life: it simply says, Go, baptize; or, Go, immerse, as our Baptist friends say. They are not found in *βαπτιζω*, for that word says nothing about resurrection: it simply puts in the water and leaves there, as we shall presently see. Nor yet are they to be found in the words, "in the

name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," for, according to the Baptist version, they simply mean by the authority of the persons of the Trinity. The question recurs, Whence this idea of a resurrection? Did John so construe the ordinance, or the Saviour so charge his disciples? Was this the common understanding of the rite? There is absolutely not not a single word, or even syllable, either in the commission itself, or the teaching of John or the Saviour, or the remotest allusion in any of the earlier writings of the New Testament, to authorize such a construction. The first and only allusion to this idea of a resurrection occurs in Paul's day, long after the date of the commission. And here we raise the question, is it at all reasonable that the Head of the Church, in giving his last great commission to his disciples, would have left the words of that commission so imperfect as to require the addition of a supplemental clause for their elucidation, and that supplemental clause not given until the days of the apostle Paul, a quarter of a century afterwards; there not being the remotest

allusion to this idea of a burial previous to that time?

Besides, as a question of fact, is this symbolic representation really and truly the commencement of this new life? According to Baptist theology, the new life must exist prior to the immersion. In many instances, persons have been converted and entered upon this new life for years before their immersion. With what propriety can baptism, in such cases, be said to be the commencement of a new life? And then, after all, suppose that the baptized persons do not enter upon this new life, what has been accomplished by the immersion? Ought they not to be re-immersed whenever they do enter upon it? And furthermore, in case of failure to rise to newness of life, what obligation has been violated? None has been imposed. There has been no declaration of an engrafting into anything, or entering upon new relations with the Trinity, in the baptismal formula used; for that formula simply says, in the name, that is, by the authority, of the Trinity, I immerse you.

Nor yet in the interpretation of the ordinance; for that interpretation simply says, buried that he might rise to newness of life. The immersion theory, at best, only professes to teach newness of life. It says nothing about relations with the different persons of the Trinity. Indeed, it has no reference to those persons except as administered in their name. It deals only with the humanity of Christ, and contemplates no other union with that humanity than a bare burial and resurrection with it—making that burial and resurrection simply a type of our own and thus completely ignoring the great theologic idea of an engrafting into Christ, and, through him, into union with the persons of the Godhead. Here then we have another impaling of the burial theory, and additional reasons for its rejection.

## THE SCRIPTURE VIEW.

**To be baptized *into* something.** The Scriptures give us plainly to understand that we are baptized into

something. Hence the use of the preposition (εἰς) signifying the end or purpose towards which the action aims. "Baptized (εἰς) into Christ." (Rom. vi. 3.) "Baptized (εἰς) into Moses." (1 Cor. x. 2.) "Baptized (εἰς) into the name of Paul." (1 Cor. i. 13.) "Baptized (εἰς) into one body." (1 Cor. xii. 13.) So "baptized (εἰς) into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

Baptized *with* something.

And not only into something, but *with* or *by means of* something. Hence the use of a different preposition (εν). "Baptized (εν) with or by means of water." "Baptized (εν) with or by means of the Holy Ghost." "Baptized (εν) with or by means of the cloud and sea." That both these ideas are implied in the ordinance, appears from the fact that both these prepositions are used in the same sentence. "For (εν) by one Spirit we are all baptized (εἰς) into one body," (1 Cor. xii. 13); "And were all baptized (εἰς) into Moses (εν) by the cloud, and (εν) by the sea." (1 Cor. x. 2.) In the common version, this last

passage is rendered *unto* Moses, and *in* the cloud and sea. But why these words εἰς and εν in the one passage should be translated *into* one body and *by* one Spirit, and in the other *unto* Moses and *in* the cloud and sea, when the writer is the same, the idea the same, and occurring in the same epistle, with only a chapter intervening, we are at a loss to know.

Contemplates inauguration of new relations.

The true and only idea, as it appears to us, is that the action in this ordinance contemplates the inauguration and formal acknowledgment of new relations with the Trinity; hence the preposition εἰς is used, and should be translated *into*. As we are "baptized *into* Christ," "baptized *into* Moses," "baptized *into* the name of Paul," "baptized *into* one body," so we are baptized *into* the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. To say that in the name and by the authority of the Trinity we baptize, is to make baptism the end, whereas the scriptures plainly teach that the act is simply the means to an end.

For the same reason, the word βαπτιζω can never be translated "dip," as we shall soon see, for the relation is to be perpetual. If the end be simply newness of life, as the burial theory contemplates, though that idea is not to be found, either in βαπτιζω or the words of the commission, but must be gratuitously supplied, then the rite ought to be repeated after every temporary apostasy, or season of spiritual declension. The very fact that the rite is never to be repeated, together with the terms of the commission, shows clearly that the true theologic idea is not that we are to be baptized simply, but baptized into something, and that something is a new relationship with the Godhead. Anything short of this makes the ordinance mean nothing.

**Relation to be perpetual.**

**Ought to be repeated.**

If this, then, be the true theologic idea, water baptism must be the symbol of that which actually ingrafts into Deity, and that brings us into these new relations. The outward rite can never do this. It may

**Symbol of that which actually engrafts.**

bring us into outer relations, but never into that which is inner and spiritual. It can only represent that which brings us into those relations. Bread and wine cannot nourish the soul; they only represent that upon which the soul feeds. So water baptism can never baptize us into the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, but only represents that which actually does. And what is that? A burial? According to the immersion theory, our burial in water represents Christ's burial in the tomb, therefore Christ's burial in the tomb, must be the thing that brings into covenant relations with Deity. But where is such a doctrine taught in the scriptures? It is impossible to conceive upon what principle a burial can bring about such a result. It is not the burial and resurrection of Christ that brings us into covenant relations with the Godhead, but the application of His atonement by the Holy Spirit. Water baptism, then, is clearly the symbol of Spirit baptism. The feast, in the supper, represents another feast. So baptism, in the other ordinance, unquestion-

ably represents another baptism, which is spiritual.

The scripture view.

That this is the scripture view is perfectly obvious from the fact that they are everywhere associated together: "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit." Here the one element is set over against the other. "I indeed have baptized you with water, but He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." Here the one baptism is set over against the other, as its counterpart. Immediately after the baptism of the Saviour, the Holy Spirit descended, and rested upon Him. Here the one baptism immediately follows the other. So Paul

The two constantly associated.

associates baptism and the Spirit: "For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body." Also in such expressions as these: "Ye are washed;" "Ye are sanctified;" "The washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost;" "The washing of water by the word," in which we perceive a clear allusion to that inner spiritual washing which is the work of the Holy Spirit, and of which the outer is but the type.

It is a remarkable fact, and one that ought for ever to set at rest this burial theory, that baptism is everywhere associated in the scriptures with the three great purifying agencies of the world, water, fire, and the Holy Spirit; baptized with water, baptized with fire, and baptized with the Holy Spirit; the object of each baptism being to cleanse. Ananias said to Paul, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins." There was a dispute between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying; the context shows that the question really was about baptism. The same also appears from the baptisms of cups and pots, and the Pharisees baptizing on their return from the market; the object in every case being to cleanse. If, then, the leading essential idea of the ordinance be purification, it must of necessity be the shadow of another and higher spiritual cleansing, which is the work of God's Spirit.

Associated with three purifying agencies.

From what has been said we make the following deductions:

1st deduction.

*1st.* If water baptism be the symbol of Spirit baptism, then it follows that immersion cannot be the mode, for it enters essentially into the very nature of a symbol that it teaches by analogy, and there is no analogy whatever between immersion and the baptism of the Spirit, for the Spirit is always represented as being "poured out," "shed down," and "descending upon." Now, draw a picture of a man immersing another, and would that ever suggest the descent of the Spirit? Immersionists see this, hence their great zeal to make the ordinance refer to the burial of Christ, because they imagine that they see some similitude between the submersion of a person in water, and the laying away the body of Jesus for three days in a tomb hewn out of a rock. If, as Dr. Dagg says, "the significancy of the rite requires immersion," then immersion requires this significancy to be attached to the rite. Take away the idea of burial from the theory of the immersionist, and the very key stone of the whole arch is removed, and nothing left to prevent its fall.

2d deduction. *2nd.* If the symbolic idea of baptism be cleansing, immersion cannot be the mode; for it utterly fails even to suggest that idea, much less realize it. It neither cleanses directly, nor symbolically. Simple dipping does not "put away the filth of the flesh." Simple dipping with clothes on, does not meet the demands of the idea "having our bodies washed in pure water." Neither is it anywhere used in Scripture as the emblem of purification. Sprinkling, pouring, and washing are Scripture symbols. But nowhere is simple dipping ever so used. Immersion and cleansing have nothing in common save the purifying nature of the element used. But when the foreign idea of a burial is introduced, and that element converted into a grave, the separation between the two becomes complete.

3d deduction. *3rd.* If baptism be the symbol of that which actually engrafts into Christ and brings us into fellowship with the Godhead, immersion cannot be the mode, for it is utterly impossible to conceive how this engrafting can be effected by means of a burial. Burial unto

"death in sin," and resurrection unto newness of spiritual life is the result of our union with Christ, and not that by which the union is effected.

4th deduction. *4th.* If baptism be a consecrating act, immersion cannot be the mode for the method of Scripture consecration has always been by pouring or sprinkling, and never by dipping. The ceremony of pouring or sprinkling was quite common in ancient consecration services. That of a burial altogether unknown.

5th deduction. *5th.* On the other hand, if water baptism be the symbol of Spirit baptism, and the mode of the latter be known, the mode of the former may easily be inferred. "I indeed baptize you with water, he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire," said John. Clearly the Saviour was to do with the Holy Ghost and fire what John did with water. If John dipped his disciples into water, so He would dip His disciples into the Spirit and fire. If John, on the other hand, applied the water to his disciples, He would apply the Spirit and fire to His disciples.

The mode was to be the same; the only difference in the two baptisms being the element used. The one using water, and the other Spirit and fire. Now how did the Saviour use the element? Did he apply the subject to the Spirit and fire, or the Spirit and fire to the subject? As the baptism occurred on the day of Pentecost the mode can easily be ascertained. The Spirit came down in the form of cloven tongues of fire and sat upon each of them. The Spirit and fire were applied to the people, and not the people to the Spirit and fire. Thus in every case of Spirit baptism, the Spirit is invariably applied to the sinner, and never the sinner to the Spirit.

The Pentecostal baptism.

This application of the Spirit and fire to the people John calls a baptism (Matt. iii., 2), and Peter says of that baptism, that it was by pouring. He quotes from the prophet Joel: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh." Now, says Peter, this what you see is what Joel spoke of. This is the pouring out of the Spirit. The baptism of the Holy

Ghost, predicted by John, promised by the Saviour, and fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, was clearly by *pouring*. So in the baptism of Cornelius, when the Holy Ghost fell upon those present, Peter said he remembered the promise that they should be "baptized with the Holy Ghost." The *falling* of the Spirit was clearly the fulfillment of the promise.

If then in Spirit baptism, the Spirit is poured out, falls upon and is applied to the people, and if water baptism is to be a pictorial representation of Spirit baptism, then the water must likewise be poured out, must fall upon and be applied to the people. The analogy demands that the application of the different elements be made in the same way and for like purposes. And we press this difficulty home upon immersionists, How can Christ's baptism be at all like John's if Christ simply pours out his Spirit upon the people whilst John plunges the people under the water? Where is the analogy if Christ applies the element to the subject, whilst John applies the subject to the element? Where is the analogy, when the

object of the one baptism is to sanctify, whilst the object of the other was to bury in a liquid grave?

The analogy between these baptisms further demands that if Christ be the great Baptizer, and his the only true baptism, of which John's was only the type; which John clearly asserts, and which immersionists will not deny; then all ritual baptism must be of the same general nature, and typical character, being but the shadow of Christ's, the real baptism; and every administrator of the ordinance, like John, becomes an humble type of the great Baptizer. But how bring in the burial theory, without completely disjointing the whole, and making the Holy Spirit as the receiving element, a grave—Christ exalted to perform the rite of sepulture, and every minister who administers the ordinance, including John himself, simply a miniature sexton—a type of Joseph of Arimathea, and not, as he really is, a dim adumbrator of the Great Baptizer?

**Every minister a miniature sexton.**

Nor is this all: That the Pentecostal baptism

was both the result and evidence of Christ's exaltation, none will deny. To the disciples it was incontestible proof that their Lord had gone to heaven, as he said. The Spirit was shed down because he was exalted a Prince and Saviour. "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father, the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear."—Acts ii., 33. So now every outpouring af the Spirit, furnishes additional proof of his ascension and exaltation to the mediatorial throne. But introduce the idea of a burial, and these two baptisms, the Pentecostal and the ritual, are at once made to speak different things: the one telling of his exaltation; the other of his humiliation: the one speaking of his life; the other of his death: the one pointing to his body upon the mediatorial throne; the other pointing to that same body, shrouded in its sepulchral vesture, and laid away in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea.

**Pentecostal and ritual baptism made to speak different things.**

And yet, the one baptism a type of the other!

Consistency of our interpretation.

In striking contrast with all this, see the consistency of our interpretation and its entire harmony with the law of symbols. We baptize with water; Jesus, the great Baptizer, baptizes with the Holy Spirit. We baptize simply *into the name;* he baptizes into actual union with the persons of the Trinity. Water cleanses the body; the Holy Spirit the soul. The water is poured out; so is also the Spirit. The two baptisms being the same, both in their meaning and the mode of their administration, the analogy is just as complete here as in the Supper. Bread and wine are used in the one sacrament because they nourish; water is used in the other because it cleanses. The one feast represents another feast. So the one baptism represents another baptism. There is just as much fitness and completeness in the one arrangement as in the other. Our conclusion, therefore, is that the significancy of the rite requires affusion as the mode.

## II. MEANING OF THE WORD.

Meaning of word.

In reply to all this we are told that no matter how plausible the argument constructed upon the ground of mere symbolical import, after all, the final appeal must be to philology. That whilst there may be differences as to the interpretation of symbols, there can be none whatever as to the meaning of *Βάπτίζω*, as it has but the "one invariable meaning all through the entire range of Greek literature," as Dr. Carson the great immersion champion, has so boldly asserted.

One would suppose, judging from the boldness with which the assertion is made, that there would be entire harmony in the camps of the immersionists as to that meaning. But this is not the case. They are far from being agreed among themselves—a part rendering the word to "*dip*," and a part to "*immerse*," and some even to "*plunge*." With considerable unanimity, however, they insist that it is a *modal* verb defining a definite act and

Immersionists not agreed.

Definite act.

nothing else, and that definite act a dipping. But when pointed to such instances as the Pentecostal baptism, the baptism of Israel in the cloud and sea, the baptism of the Saviour with suffering, and a host of instances in the classics and Patristic writers in which there is no definite action, no dipping, they shift their position and say that the leading idea is that of *envelopment.* At one time it is all action. At another, no action required; but there must be *surrounding.* At one time to *dip;* at another, it is simply to be *enveloped,* although that envelopment may be the result of the element coming upon the person or thing.

Envelopment.

Wide distinction between *act* and mere envelopment.

Now there is a wide distinction between an act and mere envelopment. If the idea be merely that of envelopment, and I envelope the face, the representative of the person, with water, and you envelope the whole body, the only difference between the baptisms, is the amount of water used. If the idea be action, and action in the

form of dipping, and nothing is baptism but the dipping of a person in water, then as the candidate walks into the water until it reaches the waist, and the administrator only dips the head and shoulders, then only that part of the man is baptized.

**Wide distinction between dip and immerse.**

There is equally a world-wide distinction between dipping and immersion. To dip is to put into some element and take out. To immerse is to put in and leave there. The dyer dips his cloths in the dye; the tanner immerses his hides in the ooze. The one puts in and takes out, the other puts in and leaves there. The object in both cases is to secure influence. Immerse can never be the synonym of dip.

**Translation and practice irreconcilable.**

Just here is made manifest the glaring inconsistency between the translation and the practice of immersionists. They translate βάπτίζω immerse, yet they do not immerse but dip. To immerse is to put in and leave there. Βάπτίζω says nothing about how long the man is to remain in the water. If sym-

bolical of the Saviour's burial, he ought to remain some time. Nor yet does it make any provision whatever for the lifting up of the candidate. Dip takes out; immersion does not, as leading Baptist scholars are now beginning to admit. "The idea of emersion is not included in it," says Dr. Conant. *Βαπτιζω* "never engages to take its subject from the water," is the admission of Dr. Kendrick. We insist that immersionist either suit their practice to the translation, or their translation to their practice. If they intend to dip, let them say dip, but if they say immerse, let them immerse, and not dip. Let them lay their candidates in the water and leave them there, and thus be acting in better accord with their translation, and at the same time more fully realizing the idea of a burial.

We are fully aware that, in this demand, we are asking a hard thing. By translating the word dip they would be suiting it to their practice, but when thus adjusted, it would quite as ill agree with their theology. They hold to the perseverance

**Dip in conflict with their theology.**

of the saints, and yet the dipping form of baptism clearly belies that doctrine. The idea of dipping is wholly inconsistent with that of permanent relations. We are not dipped into anything in a theologic sense. We are not dipped into newness of spiritual life. The change is declared to be permanent. We are not dipped into Christ or the Holy Ghost. The relations we sustain to the persons of the Trinity are all perpetual; and, as we enter them at baptism their permanency ought to be shadowed in the ordinance. This is taught in βαπτιζω. This would be exhibited in immersion, in being put in the water and left there, but not in simple dipping.

This inconsistency becomes the more apparent by contrasting their immersion in water with that in Christ and the Holy Spirit. Their theology and their translation say, "immersed in Christ."—Rom. vi., 3. "He shall immerse you in the Holy Ghost."—Luke iii., 16. And yet it is patent to every one that their immersion in water is altogether a different thing from their immersion in Christ and the Holy Spirit in this, that the

one is a burial with and the other a burial without a resurrection. In the one we are buried in the water expressly for the purpose of coming out again. In the other we are buried in Christ and the Holy Spirit expressly for the purpose of remaining there forever.

**Double difficulty.**

Here, then, immersionists are confronted with this double difficulty. They are alike unable to adjust their translation either to their theology on the one hand, or their practice on the other. To adopt dip as the translation, they ought to surrender their doctrine of permanent relations. To retain immerse, then, they ought to change their dipping practice, and make burial in water as permanent as burial in Christ and the Holy Spirit. To be consistent they ought either surrender their doctrine of permanent relations or abandon their practice of dipping. But they cannot do either without surrendering the whole. Hence they endeavor to maintain both, which they can very conveniently do under cover of the accommodating word immerse.

Dipping not found in *baptizo.*

Now we boldly assume the position that the idea of dipping is not to be found in βαπτιζω at all. This is the meaning of βαπτω and not βαπτιζω. As in English we have two different words, dip and immerse, so in Greek we have the same two corresponding words, βαπτω and βαπτιζω, the one meaning to dip, the other to immerse. These words are never confounded by the sacred writers. With the most scrupulous care they keep them separate. When they mean dip they use βαπτο and its cognates. When they speak of Christian baptism, they invariably use βαπτιζω and its cognates. Dr. Dale, in his recent masterly work, has demonstrated this beyond a cavil, and until that work is refuted, further argument upon the point would be superfluous. He shows from numerous quotations from the Classics and Patristic writers that the word βαπτιζω primarily expresses the idea of being in an immersed condition without telling how the person or thing got

into that condition, how long to remain there, or how to get out. It may be brought into that condition by plunging into, or pouring upon, or walking into water, as Alexander's army, or by waters coming over, as the seacoast immersed by the rising waves; and *secondarily*, as all words have a second or figurative meaning, it means simply a state or condition, without the immersion. First the immersion and the influence resulting therefrom, and second, the influence without the immersion. So that whatever would change the condition or state of anything, would, according to classic usage, be baptism. Thus wine, when rendered unintoxicating by pouring sea water into it, was said to be baptized. Hot iron when tempered by the application of water, was said to be baptized. When a man was stupefied with a drug, or intoxicated with wine, he was said to be baptized. In other words, that *βαπτίζω* in its secondary sense, has nothing to do with *mode*, but simply expresses *condition* or *state*.

**Whatever changes condition baptizes.**

For the benefit of those who have not access

to Dr. Dale's works, and also to show the different connections in which the word is used in the classics, we simply quote some of the headings of that work, which are as follows: "Baptism of Asia," "Sea Coast Baptism," "Baptism of Vital Power," "Baptism by Marching," "Baptism by Falling," "Baptism by Boiling Up," "Baptism by Grief," "Baptism by Wizard Arts," "Baptism by Debt," "Baptism by Study," "Baptism by Wantonness," "Baptism by Wine," "Baptism by Sleep," "Baptism by Drinking," "Baptism by Teaching," &c. The bare enunciation of these headings is enough to show the fallacy of those who maintain that baptism is a definite act, and that act to dip. Any dipping of Asia and the sea coast? Any dipping in marching, or falling, or boiling up? Any dipping in grief, or debt, or wizard arts, or wantonness, or wine, or drinking? And furthermore, the point made by Dr. Dale is well taken, that the main idea of βάπτίζω is influence.

Examples from Dr. Dale's work.

Classic not the same as New Testament Greek. — But suppose that the word meant to dip in the classics, what would that prove? Classic Greek is one thing, and New Testament Greek quite another. It matters very little how the word is used by classic authors, the question is, how is it used by the New Testament writers. Many words are used in quite a different sense in the New Testament from what they are in the classics. This is especially true with regard to the technical terms of religion, such as faith, repentance, righteousness, and the like. Surely no one will pretend to say that faith and repentance and righteousness mean the same thing in the New Testament as in Homer and Thucydides. *Δικαιοσύνη* in the New Testament generally means the imputed righteousness of Christ. The *δικαιοσύνη* of the classics means simple justice. The *δικαιοσύνη* of the New Testament saves. Examples. The *δικαιοσύνη* of the classics leads to certain damnation. *Πρεσβύτερος* in the classics means simply an old man. In the New Testament it means a church officer, and may be a

young man. Timothy was a πρεσβύτερος, yet Paul charges "Let no man despise thy youth." Take another illustration still more to the point: The word translated "supper" is δεῖπνον, and literally means a supper—a heavy meal, an entertainment. It was the word to express the principal meal of the ancients, where ample provisions were made and largely partaken of, and yet in the New Testament it means simply a bit of bread and sip of wine. Now if you demand quantities of water because βαπτίζω means to immerse, why not also demand quantities of bread and wine, because δεῖπνον means a hearty meal? If you had nothing but the Greek word you would most assuredly fall into the same error into which the Corinthians fell. They thought it meant a hearty meal, doubtless misled by the classic meaning of the word, and some indulged so freely as to become drunk, hence the rebuke of the Apostle, "What, have ye not houses to eat and drink in? If any man hunger, let him eat at home." As much as to say,

Examples. O, Corinthians; you have mistaken the very nature of this feast. The δεῖπνον of the Christian is altogether a different thing from the δεῖπνον of the heathen. Just so the βαπτίζω of the Christian is altogether a different thing from the βαπτίζω of the heathen. When the immersionist shows the place in any classic author where δεῖπνον means a bit of bread and a sip of wine, it will be a very easy matter for us to show where βαπτίζω means to sprinkle or pour. These were new ideas, and there was a necessity to coin new words, or else use old ones in new senses. The heathen had no words in their vocabulary to express the Lord's Supper or Christian baptism, and these words must necessarily be used in a new and technical sense. A theory which has nothing but a heathen word to rest upon, must have at best but a poor support.

## THE BIBLE ITS OWN INTERPRETER.

But we claim that, in this matter, the Bible must be its own interpreter. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to

this word it is because there is no light in them." A collation of the different passages will show that instead of immersion being the uniform meaning, as immersionists maintain, and the object of the rite a burial, in many places these ideas are altogether foreign, and to introduce them would simply be to do violence to every principle of exegesis, as well as of common sense.

## IMMERSION INTO SPIRIT AND FIRE.

**Immersion into Spirit and Fire.**

This is clearly the case in the passage in Luke iii., 16., to which attention has already been called. "I indeed baptize you with water, He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." On the day of Pentecost when this baptism occurred, there was absolutely nothing that was at all analogous to either dipping or an immersion, or a burial of any kind. The Spirit was poured out, and the fire descended in the form of a cloven tongue. The idea of an immersion or burial, of laying any one away in the tomb, or of an enveloping element of any kind is entirely foreign. Thus

also in every instance of Spirit baptism. When in answer to prayer for the "baptism of the Spirit," the Spirit is poured out and the sinner converted, He simply comes upon the sinner. The idea of the sinner being dipped or immersed into the Spirit is unscriptural in point of fact and at the same time, shocking to all proprieties of speech.

And this incongruity increases with the idea of a resurrection. Make the Pentecostal baptism an immersion, if you please; make the Holy Spirit, contrary to the teachings of the entire Scriptures, not the instrumental agent of baptism, but the receiving element, and translate the passage, "He shall immerse you in the Holy Ghost and fire," as the Baptists have it in their new version, and what then? Simply this: The Pentecostal baptism means burial in the Spirit, and burial in the Spirit means resurrection out of the Spirit, and thus, on that memorable day, three thousand were buried in the Spirit that they might rise again

**Resurrection out of the Spirit.**

out of that Spirit. But when did that resurrection take place? Is it ever to take place? Does not the immersionist hold to the permanency of the indwelling Spirit? How then can he with any show of consistency maintain his interpretation of the ordinance, and make it a symbol of burial and resurrection, without at the same time making it teach the doctrine of apostacy in its baldest form, a doctrine he so utterly repudiates. And how maintain that interpretation without either, on the one hand, making the baptism administerd by John entirely different from that administered by Christ, both in its meaning and form, or else maintaining the two irreconcilable propositions that John buried the people in the water to draw them out again, whilst Christ buried them in the Spirit to leave them there forever.

**Teaches apostacy.**

## IMMERSION INTO A BODY.

**Immersion into a body**

This is also the case in the passage in 1 Cor. xii., 13: "By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body." The idea of dipping or immersing or burying, and certainly that of a resurrection, is here equally forced. By what process a man can be dipped or immersed into a body, and that by a Spirit, it is not possible for us to conceive.

**Resurrection out of.**

And then when is the resurrection to take place? Resurrection is to follow burial, according to the theory. Buried in baptism for the very purpose that we might rise again we are told. When then are we to rise out of this body into which we have been buried by baptism? Does the immersionist hold that there is, or ever ought to be, a resurrection out of that body? Does he not hold to the doctrine of permanent relations with the Church, the body of Christ? Does he not teach that the

baptized person is ever afterwards to be a part of that body? Yet according to the demands of the theory, they are immediately to rise up out of that body? Buried in Christ that they might rise out of him; buried in the Spirit that they might rise out of him; buried in one body that we might rise out of it. It does seem to us that this burial theory plays sad havoc indeed with the Calvinism of his church.

**Transition in the thought.**

Notice, too, the sudden transition of the element, and the consequent confusion of the thought. In the Pentecostal baptism above mentioned he claimed that the immersion was into the Spirit. Here he must shift his ground, and hold that the immersion is not into the Spirit, but into a body, and that by means of the Spirit. In the one case the Holy Spirit is the element into which the immersion is made; in the other the agent by which the immersion is effected. It is the

teaching of Scripture that the Holy Spirit is both the element and agent of Baptism? In the baptism of John was the water both the element and agent?

**The body the invisible Church.**

The body of which mention is here made, and into which all true believers are baptized is unquestionably, the mystical body of Christ, the true invisible Church, and out of which, according to Baptist theology, there is to be no resurrection, and the agent employed, the Holy Spirit. If then the body be the invisible Church, and the agent of the baptism, the Holy Spirit, then the method must be by pouring. None will dispute that three thousand were baptized into that body in this way, on the day of Pentecost. The question, then, is pertinent, if the pouring out of the Spirit can baptize into the inner invisible body or Church, why should it be thought a thing incredible for the pouring out of water to baptize into the outer or visible body or church? And furthermore with what consistency can it be asserted that the word means to immerse and nothing

else, and that its symbolical teaching is a burial.

## IMMERSION BEFORE DINNER.

Immersion before dinner.

The Pharisee who invited Jesus to dine with him marvelled that He had not first *washed* before dinner.—Luke xi., 38. So it is said of the Pharisee, "when they come from the market except they *wash* they eat not."—Mark vii., 4. In both of these cases the word is *baptize* in the original. According then to Baptist interpretation, the teaching would be that the Pharisee wondered that Jesus did not first immerse Himself before dinner, though at a stranger's house, with no provision made for such immersion, and certainly without any evidence that He was asked to do such a thing. "Thou gavest me no water for my feet," was the charge against another Pharisee on a similar occasion. And furthermore that the Pharisees never return from the market or sit down to a meal without first immersing themselves. In other words, that three or more immersions a day was customary among

them, according to the number of meals or returns from the market. We will not deny the possibility of these repeated daily ablutions, but we do maintain their improbability. We do maintain the improbability of immersing the whole body, when only the hands have been defiled, and the hands alone would come in contact with the food to be eaten. We do maintain the improbability of a mere dipping, when washing and not dipping merely is necessary to remove defilement. Here is a baptism by *washing*, and our translators, we think, have exhibited their usual good sense in translating the word *wash* and not immerse; nor even baptize.

## IMMERSION OF TABLES.

Immersion of tables.

Then the washing, in the Greek, the baptizing of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels and tables. These tables were large reclining couches, each of which was large enough to admit three persons to recline upon them. Now is it at all reasonable to suppose that each Pharisee kept a large water tank,

which he would be compelled frequently to fill, to keep the water pure, and into which these huge tables were to be plunged, when the end designed could be so easily reached by the application of water to them? Furthermore, these couches doubtless were cushioned, as they would otherwise be uncomfortable. Were the cushions also immersed? And if removed, why immerse the couches without them? Here, as in the preceding, is a baptism *by washing*.

## DIVERSE IMMERSION.

Diverse immersion.

Then the "divers washing," in Heb. ix., 10. In the original, it is *diverse baptisms*. The apostle was speaking of the old Jewish rites and ceremonies. These he terms different or diverse baptisms. Now if baptism be a simple dipping, with what propriety could he speak of these several dippings as being different or diverse? Are not all dippings alike? If the diversity be made applicable not to different modes, but different subjects of the same mode, then we call for proof to show that there was

anything analagous to all this, under the old economy. We call for proof to show that in a single instance a Jewish priest ever immersed anybody in anything. Paul was speaking of the Levitical law and the official acts of the Priesthood, formally prescribed by that law, and not mere tradition. Let the immersionist, then, point out to us, if he can, in the whole range of the Levitical law a single statute, requiring immersion at the hands of a priest, either of different classes, or the different immersions of the same class; we challenge him to show in any of those official baptisms, of which the apostle is speaking, a single instance in which the officiating priest buried anybody in anything, or a single instance in which he ever applied the subject to any element. If you would know in what those diverse baptisms consists, you have only to consult the context wherein we have a plain allusion to the different application of water, oil and blood to the unclean, by pouring and sprinkling. Here is a baptism by either *sprinkling or pouring*. The official plunging of any unclean per-

son into anything, is absolutely unheard of, in Moses and the prophets.

## IMMERSION OF NOAH.

Immersion of Noah.

Peter institutes a comparison between baptism and the salvation of Noah and his family. "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us." "The like figure"! In what does it consist? Immersion? Assuredly not. Noah and his family were not immersed, or dipped into anything, either literally or figuratively. They simply entered the ark, and were saved out of the flood. If this being in a ship constitutes an immersion then every one who goes to sea is immersed. There is absolutely nothing in the history of the flood that furnishes the counterpart to this burial theory, but the submersion of the antediluvians. They, and only they, were the buried ones; and Noah's baptism saved because it was not an immersion. "The like figure," does not consist in any similitude between being in the water, in

**The like figure.** baptism, and out of it in the ark, for here we have contrast, not resemblance, but clearly in this: that even that as those eight souls, who entered the ark, were saved from the first flood, so all who enter Christ, the true Ark, by means of Spirit baptism, which alone secures the "answer of a good conscience," and of which water baptism is but the mere shadow, shall be saved from the second deluge. Here is a baptism simply by *deliverance*. The idea of dipping, so far as Noah and his household are concerned, is entirely foreign.

## IMMERSION INTO SUFFERING.

**Immersion into suffering.** The Saviour speaks of His suffering as a baptism, "I have a baptism to be baptized with"; and the cause of that suffering, the drinking of a cup. "Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." Here we have a baptism by *drinking*. And we submit, whether it would not be a perversion of

all language, as well as rejection of a favorite Scripture metaphor, to speak of this drinking of a cup, as an immersion or dipping. In no sense could Christ's sufferings be said to be an immersion or dipping; He was dipped into nothing. He was not dipped into suffering. That element was applied to Him, and not He to the element. Nor yet was He dipped into the wrath of God; for that wrath was poured out upon Him, and poured from His side, the water and blood, the witnesses of His death. With the one our soul is cleansed; with the other our body. And here we raise the question, If there be this necessity for immersion in water, why not also in blood? If our souls can be cleansed by being sprinkled with atoning blood, why may not our bodies be likewise symbolically purified by being merely sprinkled with baptismal water?

## IMMERSION INTO MOSES.

**Immersion into Moses.** Then lastly the baptism of the Israelites into Moses in the cloud and sea.—1 Cor. x. 2, utterly precludes the idea

of dipping. Would you say dipped or buried into Moses? When did that remarkable burial take place? Or would you say dipped or immersed into the cloud and sea? It would indeed take a considerable stretch of the imagination to conceive how they were dipped or immersed into the cloud and sea when neither touched them. Moses says, they went through on "dry ground." Nor was there any like envelopment by cloud and sea, so as to constitute what Dr. Carson denominates a "dry baptism," for the cloud was *behind* and not over them; between the camps of Israel and Egypt. Pharaoh and his host were the immersed ones. The simple truth is, they were neither immersed into Moses nor into the cloud, nor yet into the Red Sea; but were *baptized* into Moses, that is, into his doctrines, his teachings, his leadership, by the cloud and the sea, by being led through the sea, by the same "pillar of cloud," that led them out of Egypt. By the presence of God in the cloud, and their manifest deliverance from the sea, they were fully committed to Moses

Baptized into Moses.

as their captain and leader. Here then was another baptism by *deliverance* without any act of dipping whatever, and without any application of water, unless it be what the clouds poured out, of which mention is made by the Psalmist.—Ps. lxxvii. 17. And we may very pertinently ask, if the Israelites, together with their households, could be baptized into Moses, without an immersion, why should it be thought an impossibility for believers and their children likewise to be baptized into Christ without an immersion?

These examples from the Scriptures themselves show how utterly untenable is the position that *Βάπτίζω*, is a modal verb, signifying a definite act, and that act to dip. The baptism of Pentecost was not a dipping. The people were dipped into nothing. The Spirit was simply poured out. In the baptism into the mystical body of Christ, there is no dipping, but an engrafting. No one is ever dipped into that body. In the diverse baptisms of the old dispensation, including that of tables and the dinner baptisms of the Pharisees there was

*Baptizo* not a modal verb.

no dipping, but washing, pouring, and sprinkling; there being no law requiring the official plunging of the unclean into anything. In Spirit baptism there is no dipping into the Spirit, the Spirit being applied to the sinner, and never the sinner to the Spirit. In fire baptisms there was no dipping into fire, but a descent of that element. There was no dipping in Noah's baptism. Nor any dipping into Moses, nor yet into the cloud and sea, at Israel's baptism at the Red sea, for they touched neither. And so in the Saviour's last baptism, by which He was inducted into His kingly office, there was no dipping. He was not dipped into the wrath of God, but that wrath according to prophetic imagery, was poured out upon Him. Nor yet was He dipped into suffering, for that element was applied to Him, He being brought under the influence of the cup given Him by His Father by his drinking the same. And yet, in the face of all this, we are deliberately told that *Βάπτίζω* is a modal verb, signifying to dip and nothing else!

These explanations show further that this

word, the boasted strength of the immersionists, and the stronghold upon which they so confidently rely, instead of settling the question, as they would have us believe, actually *determines nothing as to mode;* being thus variously associated with the different acts of pouring, sprinkling, washing, engrafting, delivering and drinking, —in which acts, if any uniformity of mode be at all discernible, it is certainly not that of a dipping or burial of any kind, but the invariable application of the element to the subject. And herein we see the wisdom of our translators in simply transferring this word, without translating it, for it clearly means neither to immerse, nor to sprinkle, nor to pour, but *to baptize*—the main idea being to bring into a new relation or condition. As the application of water brings the body into a clean state, so the application of the Holy Spirit to the soul brings it into a new state of holiness. And we accept the definition of Dr. Dale, that whatever brings us into a new state or condition, or in other words, into new relations with God and His Church, is baptism, whether

it be sprinkling, pouring, or immersion; the main stress being laid upon the use of water as the symbol of purification.

Immersion admitted, with doubt.

We admit immersion to be baptism though not without a doubt. The ground of our doubt, is not its irregularity; it being a departure, as we believe, from the Scripture mode. For mode is nothing. The disciples reclined at the supper. Some Christians kneel, others sit, and standing would do just as well if circumstances required it. But the ground of our doubt, is its interpretation. If the Spirit never designed it to symbolize burial and you make it a symbol of Christ's burial and resurrection, do you not entirely pervert its meaning? And the question comes up, How far we may thus pervert the intention of an ordinance, without entirely destroying its validity?

## III. INSTANCES OF SCRIPTURE BAPTISMS.

The conclusion reached is just as strongly sustained by the instances given in the Scrip-

tures, the recorded circumstances all warranting the presumption that they were not immersions.

## JOHN'S BAPTISM.

**John's baptism.** It is stated that "Jerusalem, Judea, and all the region round about Jordan," went out and were baptized by John. The ministry of this man seems to have been very short, not exceeding eighteen months. As the object of the baptism was to prepare the nation for the coming of its King, it must have been very extensive. Now, we submit the question, whether it is possible, without a miracle, for one man in little over a year, and a portion of the time winter, to immerse all Judea, Jerusalem, and the region round about Jordan. If he had immersed but one-tenth of the population he must have been at least one half of each day in the water. What say the circumstances of John's baptism? Which do they favor most, immersion or sprinkling, one of the divers baptisms of the old Jewish ceremonial?

## BAPTISM OF THE THREE THOUSAND.

Baptism of the three thousand.

Could twelve men immerse three thousand in only a part of a day? Peter commenced his sermon at nine o'clock, and it is not at all reasonable to suppose that the preaching and exhortation were through before midday. The gospel was new and not understood. The New Testament was not yet written. The apostles had a grand opportunity of proclaiming this new gospel, for the people were gathered from all parts of the world in attendance upon the feast. Paul on one occasion continued his preaching till midnight. Surely these apostles must have spent the larger part of the day in preaching and explaining the gospel. The question therefore is this, could twelve men hear the experience, and immerse three thousand in the small part of the day that was left? Tell us not of the "seventy." The historian makes mention of none other than "Peter and the eleven." Nor yet of the "one hundred and twenty," previously mentioned. We have no evidence from the record that any of them were

authorized to baptize. And where did they find water? The little streams of Kedron and Siloam were wholly inadequate. And the old story about "public pools" and "private baths," will not endure a moment's scrutiny. Would those bigoted Jews, whose hatred and prejudice ran so high as to compel the crucifixion of the Saviour, and afterwards led to such unrelenting persecution of his followers even unto death, allow their public pools or private baths, even if they had any large enough for the purpose, to be thus used by these converted strangers, temporarily gathered in the city? And then how about the baptismal robes? Is it at all likely that the three thousand went dripping through the streets of Jerusalem. As the whole thing was sudden and unexpected, in the absence of all conveniences, it would take at least the balance of the day in making preparations. We certainly feel safe in the assertion that no church and congregation in these latter days, could get ready in less time. What say the circumstances here? What do they favor most, affusion or immersion?

## BAPTISM OF SAUL.

**Baptism of Saul.**

The account says, that after three days of blindness and fasting, "he arose and was baptized." In the original, it is *rising* or *standing up*, (*αναστας* in the participial form) was baptized. Not a word said about going in search of a river or pool. Indeed it is worthy of note that that circumstance is nowhere mentioned in any of the recorded cases. The language gives us plainly to understand that he was baptized right then and there. Ananias was sent to Saul. He found him in the house of Judas, in a reclining posture, the result of blindness and exhaustion. He puts his hand upon him, the scales fell from his eyes, he receives sight, and rising or standing up, was forthwith baptized *then and there;* and not until afterwards did he receive meat and was strengthened. Where is the evidence of Saul's immersion? There is absolutely not a single statement or circumstance, but what forbids the supposition.

**"Standing up," was baptized.**

## BAPTISM OF THE JAILOR.

Baptism of the jailor.

This case is similar to the preceding, only stronger. The baptism was unquestionably performed in the prison. The circumstances all go to prove this. It was midnight. The river was far off. Nothing is said about taking the jailor there. Indeed such an act would be contrary to law and therefore inconsistent with Christian fidelity. Besides, according to Roman custom, the jailor would thereby have forfeited his life. This is the reason he was about to kill himself when he thought his prisoners had escaped. Furthermore, if they had undertaken to leave the prison would they not have been arrested by the guard at the outer gate, and also discovered by the watchmen of the city? And if they had thus privily gone out with what honesty could they have asserted the next day, "They have beaten us openly, and now will they thrust us out privily?" The circumstances all go to show, that, right *there and then*, in the prison, and at midnight the jailor was baptized. If immersed, there must of ne-

cessity have been present a pool. But the very pertinent question here springs up: Was it ever customary in any part of the known world to construct jails with pools in them? True it is said they were brought into the jailor's house, all being in the same enclosure. Even admit that the jailor was baptized in his own house, and what is gained? The evidence all goes to show that the jailor was a heathen, being a Roman, not a Jew. Immersion in his apartment, therefore requires the gratuitous assertion that heathen jailors, not only had bath-tubs in their houses, but bath-tubs of sufficient size for the complete submersion of the whole body, a supposition, permit us to say, exceedingly unreasonable. There is no evidence whatever, that Paul and the jailor left the prison enclosure, or that there was a pool of sufficient size either in the prison proper, or the apartment of the jailor. To claim either is simply to assert what is neither stated nor even hinted at in the record, and which certainly requires a vast amount of credu-

lity to receive. The probabilities are all decidedly against the supposition of immersion.

## BAPTISM OF CORNELIUS.

**Baptism of Cornelius.**

While Peter was speaking in the house of Cornelius, the Holy Ghost fell on them that heard, and Peter said, "Can any man forbid water that these should be baptized?" Forbid water! Could this language with any propriety be applied to a river or creek which by common consent is the common property of all, and which therefore no man would have a right to forbid? Not forbid *us*, but forbid *water*. Not forbid our going to the water, but forbid the water being brought to us. This language clearly implies that water was to be brought and applied to the subject, and not the subject carried to the water. And note again, that in all the ceremonial cleansing of the old dispensation, the element, whether water, oil, or blood, was *invariably* applied to the subject or thing, and in no case, was the subject or thing applied to

**Element applied to subject invariably.**

the element. The tabernacle was anointed *with* oil. The blood was sprinkled *upon* the altar. The water was sprinkled *upon* the people. The consecrating oil was poured *upon* the head. In Spirit baptism, as we have already stated, the Spirit is applied to the sinner, and not the sinner to the Spirit. Would it not then be astonishing that in water baptism, contrary to all analogy, the subject should be applied to the element, and not the element to the subject. But the Scriptures settle this, for they distinctly declare that we are baptized, not *in* water, but ὕδατι the dative of instrument, *with* water.—See Luke iii., 16. Acts i., 5, and xi., 16. The utter silence of the narrative concerning a river or pool favors the belief that Cornelius and his party, were all baptized *with* water, in the house where they heard Peter, and where the Spirit fell upon them.

## BAPTISM OF THE EUNUCH.

Baptism in a "Desert place."

This baptism took place in a "desert place," near Gaza. Modern travellers

are unable to find any large streams anywhere about that section, which at once throws difficulty in the way of immersionists. And the very expression "a certain water," not giving its name, contrary to Scripture usages, only adds additional force to the presumption, that the stream or fountain was unknown and unnamed, and therefore exceedingly small.

**Difficulty about clothing.**

And then we have that same old difficulty about clothing. Is it not astonishing that nothing is ever said about raiment in any of these recorded instances? Of the murderers of Stephen it is said they "laid down their clothes." Of the Saviour it is said on one occasion, he "laid aside his garments." The magistrates when about to scourge Paul and Silas, rent off their clothes. Bartimeus threw his garment away, and the angel commanded Peter to cast his garment about him. But not a word is ever said about changing raiment at baptism. How do you account for this invariable universal silence?

But the immersionist feels assured he has an

"Down into," and "out of."

answer to this and every other difficulty in the simple statement, "they went down both into the water" and they "came up out of the water." Scholars know very well that the preposition επὶ translated "*unto*" a certain water, is generally translated *upon*. The idea is that the chariot came *upon* a certain water, and probably stood resting in it. It is also known that the prepositions εις and εκ are just as often and even more commonly translated *to* and *from*, than *into* and *out of*. And furthermore that from the peculiar construction of the words in the original, the word *down* has reference to the chariot and not the water. The chariot and not the bank, is the starting point of the action. The word is κατεβησαν.

Force of *katebesan.*

They went *down*, not down from the bank into the water, but they went down from the chariot. "Down from," and "down into", are entirely different things. So the other word ανεβησαν has reference to the chariot and not the water bank. Not that they went up to the

bank, but to the chariot. They went down from the chariot εἰς to the water, and they went up to the chariot, εκ from the water. Now we submit it to scholars, whether, apart from the question in dispute, and simply upon exegetical principles alone, this rendering would not be easier and more natural than the rendering in our common version? Furthermore we submit, if it were the intention of the writer simply to convey the idea that they went down from the chariot to and from the water would he not have used precisely the words that are here employed? These words then lack a great deal of settling the question as immersionists so confidently assert. They lack a great deal of proving that the Eunuch even went into the water's edge, much less of being put under it.

This rapid review of the recorded instances, clearly shows that the *circumstantial* argument is entirely in favor of the affusionist. It does not seem possible that the baptism of the jailor could have been by immersion. The probabilities are all against the immersion of Saul and

Cornelius. And whilst the language determines nothing as to the mode of the Eunuch's baptism, the circumstances are as favorable to affusion as to immersion, if not more so; and thus, no matter how the subject is viewed, whether symbolically, philologically, exegetically, or circumstantially, the conclusion is uniformly the same; whilst the combination of these different lines of argumentation constitutes a demonstration wholly irresistible.

We pause here, to notice some objections.

## IV. OBJECTIONS.

**Obj. 1st. Baptized "in Jordan."**

But some will say was not the Saviour baptized "in Jordan," and what does that mean but immersion? Without stopping to raise the question whether the words could not with equal propriety be translated *at* or *near* Jordan, we would ask if a man cannot go in a river without being immersed? Can a man not stand in water, without being put under it? In water is one thing and under water is quite a different thing. A

man may be in water all day and not get under it. How easy a thing it would be for those who were to be baptized to lay aside their sandals, and to walk into the edge of the water, and for John to dip water and pour it upon them, or to take a Hyssop branch and dip it in the water and sprinkle it upon them, as Moses did the Levites at their cleansing.—Num. viii., 7, and the people of Israel at Sinai.—Heb. ix., 19. John was a Jewish priest and it is but reasonable to suppose that he practiced some of the forms of "divers baptisms" of which Paul speaks, and which were then in use in his day.

**Why go to the river?**

But the question is asked, and very properly, why go to the river? Does not this simple fact of itself, carry with it an overwhelming presumption in favor of immersion? Who ever goes to a river nowadays, it is confidently asked, to baptize by affusion? And who, permit us to ask in our turn, ever heard of any one else ever going there in apostolic times? The Scriptures never, after the close of John's ministry, once mention Jordan, or

Enon, or make the remotest allusion to "much water," why is this? Why is it that not one word is said about going to a river or baptizing in Jordan, or any other river or stream, after John's time? This point certainly needs clearing up by our immersion brethren. If John immersed in a river it would seem that Paul and Peter and the apostles would all incline in the same direction. But not one word is said about their ever going to the river or in search of much water. Why is this? There must certainly have been something very peculiar about John's baptism to give to that this fondness for the river and therefore a special fitness in his going there to baptize. In what then did that specialty consist?

John only goes

Special fitness in going to the river.

1st. Circumstances of case.

1. That fitness appears first in the circumstances of the case. John's home was in the wilderness, near Jordan. His ministry in the open air. Crowds flocked to hear him. There was obviously a necessity for quantities of water for other reasons beside bap-

tismal purposes Hence the use of the river.

2d. Peculiar nature of John's baptism

2. A second reason arises out of the peculiar nature of John's baptism. Though specially designed as the introduction to the new dispensation, it nevertheless belonged to and formed the concluding act of the old, and must therefore have conformed to the genius of that dispensation. Like the entire Jewish ceremonial its main idea was that of cleansing; hence the amount of water used. The rite as administered by John doubtless consisted of two parts, affusion and washing. Lepers were cleansed by having water and blood sprinkled upon them by the officiating priest, and their bodies washed with water, which was their own act.—Lev. xix. The man defiled from contact with a dead body was cleansed by being sprinkled with water of purification, the official part of the act, and washing his clothes and bathing his flesh, which were his own acts.—Num. xix. Hence David prays that God would cleanse him with both water and blood, by washing him in water and sprinkling him with a hyssop branch dipped in blood. The great idea of the old dispensa-

tion was that of cleansing, and the mode twofold. Washing, which was always the act of the defiled person, and sprinkling or pouring, according to the element used, which was the official part of the act. As John's baptism belonged to that dispensation. it must have conformed to that idea, and adopted the customary mode, especially as his ministry opens without any explanation whatever of the nature of the ordinance, which is strong presumptive proof that the thing was fully understood, and must therefore have been in strict conformity with established customs. Those who came to him being Jews, doubtless were sprinkled with the hyssop branch dipped in water, and afterwards washed their bodies, the river being necessary more for the ablution than for the baptism. In Christian baptism, the washing part has been dispensed with and the sprinkling part retained, as better suited to the genius of the new dispensation. Just the same as in the supper. The δειπνον or feast part has been

Two parts of the rite, washing and sprinkling.

Washing part dispensed with.

dispensed with, and the "bit of bread and the sip of wine part," has been retained. Hence in the prophesies of Isaiah and Ezekiel, concerning "sprinkling the nations" and making them clean, nothing is said about washing them. Hence too after John's day we read nothing more about baptizing in Jordan, or any other river, but of baptisms in cities and houses, in jails and desert places, and by the roadside, which would be wholly unaccountable upon any other supposition.

**3d. Reason. Uncleanness of unclean imputed to water.**

3. Another reason why John used the water of a river. According to the Mosaic law the uncleanness of the unclean was communicated to everything touching it. The water then in John's baptism must necessarily be in large quantities, otherwise it would become defiled by the very contact with the uncleanness of such vast multitudes.

**4th Reason. Running water key to problem.**

4. But the concluding reason, and one that constitutes the very key to the river problem, is the simple fact, that

the "water of purification" to be used in the purifying of the unclean, was by special statute, required to be "running water." John being a Jewish priest and acting under the Jewish *regime*, with a ministry and baptism of purification and preparation for the coming of the Messiah (and not a burial with Him before He was dead) doubtless understood and observed this law, by using running water in this ceremonial purification; which law was in full force until abrogated by Christ at His coming. Hence after Christ we hear nothing more about a river or running stream.

If these be not the reasons, then let the immersionist tell, if he can, why no one but John baptized in the river, or why no mention is ever afterwards made of anyone else going in search of much water?

**Obj. 2. Enon and much water.**

Objection 2. But says another, Did not John go to Enon "because there was much water?" If John simply wanted water, why did he leave Jordan? Previously he had been baptizing at Bethabara,

on the opposite bank of the river. If then he simply desired much water for immersion purposes, why go six or eight miles in the country where there were no large streams, when a river lay at his feet, a river too made sacred by the baptism of Jesus? There must have been another reason besides the want of much water. The law just considered throws light upon this point. It was not the quantity of water simply, as the quantity of the *right kind*, that John was in search of. The river Jordan at certain seasons, overflows its banks.—Josh. iii., 12, and becomes muddy, and therefore unfit for baptismal purposes. It was doubtless during one of these overflows, that he abandoned the river and went to Enon, a place near by, where there was plenty of clean *running* water, and in such abundance, as not only to meet all the wants of the multitude but also the demand of the Judaic idea of purification, which was to be effected by means of clean running water. That this is the true view appears from the original. The word Enon, the

Quantity of the right kind.

name of the place, means *fountains*, and the words translated much water πολλα υδατα literally mean many waters, that is streams. He leaves Jordan then and goes to Enon because it was a place of clean running streams and fountains.

Obj. 3d. One baptism.

Objection 3. But says a third, do not the Scriptures speak of "one faith, one Lord, one baptism." How reconcile this declaration with the affusion theory? But do they not also speak of three baptisms—a baptism of water, a baptism of fire, and a baptism of the Holy Ghost? Now how is this statement to be reconciled with the immersion theory? If we be forced by the necessities of anti-Pœdo Baptist logic to take one of these three, shall it be that of water? But are we shut up to this necessity? The immersionist may be forced to the desperate alternative of choosing one of the three, but we are not. Paul is right in asserting that there is but one baptism. As there is but one baptizer even Christ, so there is but one baptism, even that of

the Spirit, of which water and fire baptism are but the emblems or shadows. A man's shadow is one with himself, so also his picture. But if you change the picture, into that of an ox, or the shadow, into that of a tree, they are no longer one. If you make water baptism a burial, whilst fire and Spirit baptism be a cleansing, and the one by pouring, and the other by immersion, then these three baptisms are no longer one, and the apostle becomes a falsifier of the truth. We press this difficulty upon the attention of immersionists, and ask how will it be possible for them to reconcile this emphatic declaration of the apostle, with their burial theory? Our interpretation is in perfect harmony with the teaching of the apostle. We make the two minor baptisms but the shadows or types of the third; the leading idea of the three being that of purification. But their interpretation completely destroys the unity of the ordinance, making water baptism altogether a different thing from either fire or Spirit baptism both in its

**Two minor baptisms types.**

symbolization and the mode of its administration. And thus this passage, so often and confidently quoted as irrefragable proof of their position, does in reality but deal a death-blow to the whole immersion scheme.

Obj. 4th. What good little water do?

Objection 4. But still another will ask, what good will a little water do? We might ask, what good will a great deal do? Is it water that washes away sin, or engrafts into Deity? Is it not merely the symbol of that which actually does? And cannot a little water be a symbol, as well as an ocean? We might also ask, what good will a little bread and wine do, in the other sacrament? If you insist upon a quantity of water in the one, why not insist upon a quantity of bread and wine, in the other, especially as the word in the classics never means anything else but a hearty meal? It is just as godlike to use a little water in the one sacrament, as to use a little bread and wine in the other—just as godlike to pour a little water on the head, as to pour a little oil upon the heads of the prophets, priests, and kings of

old—just as godlike to pour a little water on the head, as to sprinkle a little blood upon the altar, or a little water upon the unclean. God's arrangements and ceremonies are all very simple; the object being to guard against this very tendency in our nature to trust in the outward form, and thus by the very simplicity of the service to drive us away from the symbol to the thing symbolized

God's arrangements all simple

## V. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS.

In addition to what has already been said, we might, if it were necessary, adduce other considerations, by way of fortifying the positions already established.

1. Universal adaptation.

1. We might argue in favor of affusion from its universal adaptation to all places, all conditions, all circumstances, all climates, all seasons, winter as well as summer, the regions of perpetual snow and ice, as well as the milder temperature of a tropical clime—how it is suited alike to the aged and infirm, the sick and dying. A chaplain in

the late Confederate army baptized a dying soldier on the battle-field of Shiloh in the darkness of the night with water out of his canteen; what would an immersionist have done under the circumstances? The writer once baptized a sick woman upon her bed, under circumstances that doubtless would have rendered her immersion fatal, and justly made him chargeable with her death. How many just such cases all over the world! How many thousands of bedridden people are there, who could not be carried to a pool! Is it at all reasonable that God, who has adjusted all his laws and requirements to the condition of his creatures, would have instituted a rule from which so many, would, through physical infirmity, be necessarily debarred? Would he have issued a sweeping command to his disciples, to go and do a certain thing—to go into all the world and immerse every one that believed, making no exception whatever to the rule, when in the very nature of the case, it would be utterly impossible, in so many instances, to do the thing commanded?

**Baptism of dying soldier.**

2. Array of learning and piety.

2. We might argue from the great array of learning and piety that have been its advocates. How that reformers and martyrs, the best scholars, and the most pious men that have ever lived, have believed in, and practised the same, and how that there is no evidence in history, but that it has been the practice of the church, from the days of the apostles down to the present time; and how that at the present day at least nine tenths of the Christian world are in favor with it.

3. God graciously owning and blessing.

3. We might argue from the fact that God has most graciously owned and blessed the labors of those ministers in those churches that have practiced it, which would not be, if sprinkling be such a sin and dishonor as represented to be.

4. Its symplicity.

4. We might argue from its very symplicity. As a little bread and wine are used in the one sacrament, it would seem proper that a little water should be used in the other. Any additional ceremony destroys the uniqueness of the whole arrangement, by unduly

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exalting one part above the other, and at the same time draws the mind away from the great central truths of the gospel, by the substitution of a mere ordinance in their stead.

**5. Tree known by its fruits.**

5. We might also argue upon the universally recognized principle, that a tree is known by its fruits, and that those churches which believe in the same, produce just as much good fruit, as much faith and love, and good works and consistent piety, and deep seated religion, and certainly as much Christian liberality, as those which practice immersion. The advocates of affusion stand upon the broad and fundamental principle of universal charity and love, and in all the catholicity of a heavenly Spirit, throw open their hearts and tables to every true disciple of Jesus, of every denomination. The immersion theory on the other hand unavoidably drives its advocates into a state of complete isolation from the Christian world, and at the same time gives ample scope for the fullest exercise of a selfish intolerant and proselyting spirit, which is wholly incompatible

with the teachings of Christianity and the gospel.

But we have said enough. It is now left with the reader to say whether there is any warrant whatever, in Scripture or reason, for the high ground taken by those, who so dogmatically assert that nothing is baptism but immersion, and for the still higher and bolder ground occupied by those who so unscrupulously arrogate to themselves the exclusive right to be called the only true church, not because of the presence of the indwelling Spirit, the Scripture test, and the unanswerable argument growing out of the fact of actual possession, but simply because they have been immersed in water! What a marvel of self-reliant assumption and assertion!

**The argument left with the reader.**

Before any mere fallible man should be willing to take such high ground, and so unhesitatingly say to such an army of devoted ministers whom God hath raised up, and sent forth to preach His truth and administer His ordinances, and upon whose labors He has so unmistakably set the seal of his approbation, ye are no ministers,

and ye have no right to do these things, and if ye do them it is with sacrilegious hands, and to such an host of churches, planted by the same Divine hand, and watered by the same Holy Spirit, ye are no churches, and have no right to sit with the saints at the Lord's table and commemorate the love of a common Saviour—thus rending asunder the body of Christ, not simply in its outward organism, but in its true inner spiritual life and communion,—he ought to know most assuredly and beyond even a *peradventure*, that he has for his feet to rest upon, a foundation as broad, as firm, and as immovable, as the "everlasting hills" themselves. Yea, nothing less than an emphatic "Thus saith the Lord." Now whether such have this foundation or anything even approximating thereto, we leave the reader to judge.

It only remains for us in conclusion to insist upon the necessity of looking away from the outer, to the inner meaning of this rite, from the symbol to the thing symbolized It is not baptism that saves It is not immersion, nor

sprinkling, nor pouring that cleanses, but the application of the blood of Christ to the heart, and the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. Let us then not rest satisfied, until the Spirit be poured out, and the blood of Christ be sprinkled upon our hearts. These are the essentials in religion. Without these, we are still, and ever will be "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise." Without these we are not, and never can be, members of the true invisible church; and without these, we shall most assuredly be excluded from the Paradise of God, and all participation in the privileges of the redeemed

May God wash us all in atoning blood, and sanctify us by His Spirit, and gather us at last into His kingdom above, and to His name be all the praise forever. Amen.